Chronic Wasting Disease UPDATE

from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Fall 2004

2003 CWD Management in Brief

Disease Surveillance

During the 2003-04 deer hunting season, the DNR collected deer samples from the disease eradication zone (DEZ), intensive harvest zone (IHZ) and herd reduction zone (HRZ). Additional samples were collected from select counties outside of CWD zones to meet overall surveillance goals and in areas considered high risk because of proximity to CWD-infected deer across the Illinois border or CWD-infected deer/elk farms.

Overall, the DNR collected 8346 deer from the IHZ and DEZ, 4085 from the HRZ, and 2594 from other areas of the state this past season. As of July 20, 115 wild deer tested positive for CWD from the 2003 seasons. The breakdown was 106 from the DEZ/IHZ in southwest Wisconsin, five from the DEZ in Rock County, and two from the Herd Reduction Zone in Rock County.

Two CWD-positive deer were shot outside of an established CWD zone, one each in Kenosha and Walworth counties. Both counties were considered at high risk for the disease because of their proximity to CWD-positive deer in Illinois. The DEZ and HRZ were expanded for this upcoming hunting season to incorporate these new positives.

Disease surveillance continues to be a critical part of CWD management. Test results from deer samples provide crucial information and guide future management. A summary of surveillance results to date is available on the DNR Web site, **dnr.wi.gov**, under "Chronic Wasting Disease in Wisconsin."

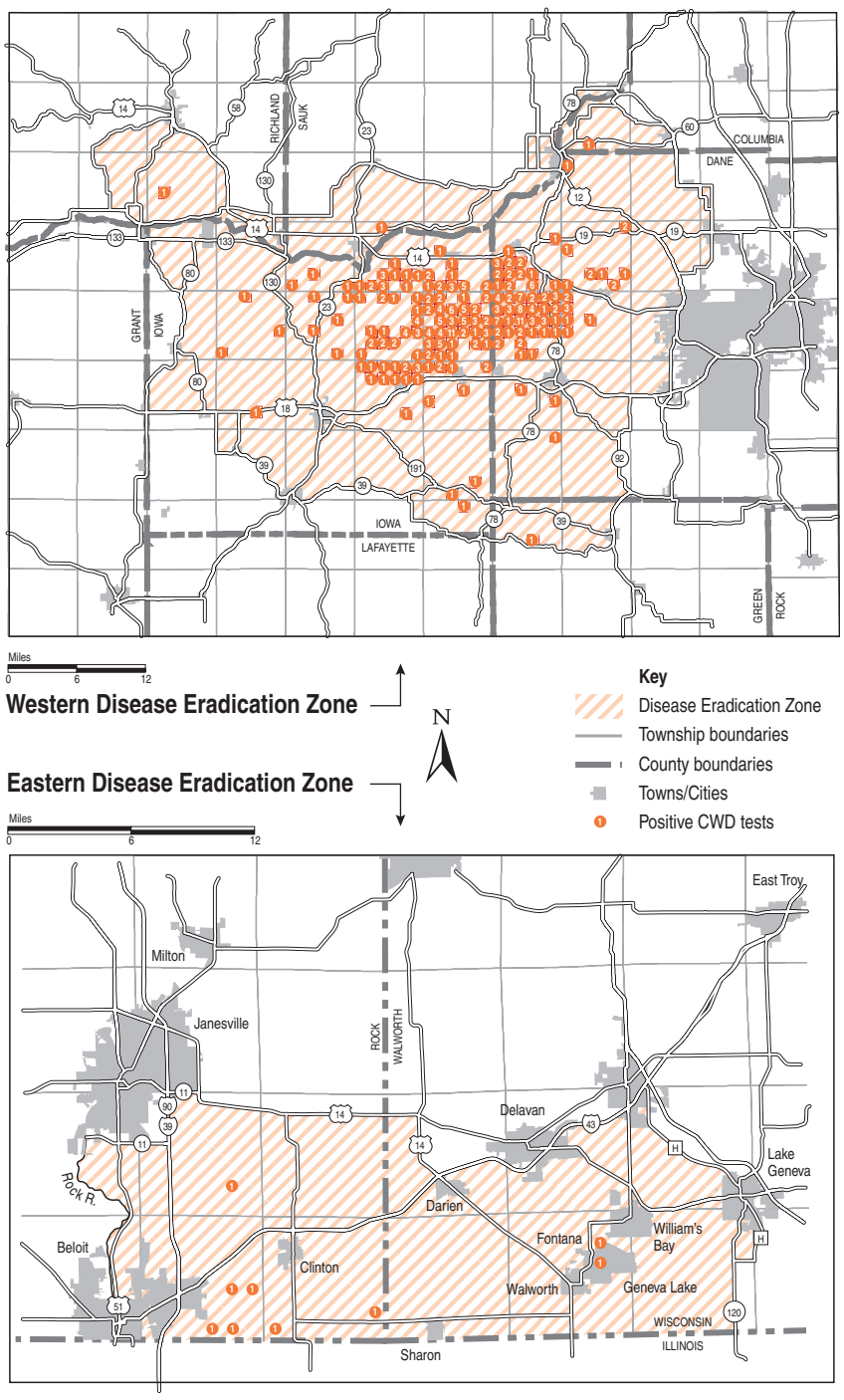
Testing developments

During the 2002 and 2003 deer hunting seasons Wisconsin used the Immunohistochemistry (IHC) test to confirm presence of CWD in deer. IHC has been the gold standard for CWD tests for a number of years and while a very accurate test, it takes more time to complete than some newer tests. When every sample was tested using IHC, hunters had to wait up to three months or more for test results.

In 2003, our in-state testing lab—the Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory (WVDL)—began using a pre-IHC screening test, known as an ELISA test, to identify suspect CWD-positive samples. Suspect positives were then tested using the IHC technique for the final say. The screening test was able to process samples much faster. Most hunters received test results in a few weeks.

As before, hunters will receive a postcard if their deer tests negative and a phone call if the result is positive. Results will also be posted on the Internet at **dnr.wi.gov**.

Number of CWD-Positive deer found in Wisconsin's Disease Eradication Zones



Records of the location of CWD-positive deer show the majority of CWD-positive deer coming from an area in western Dane and eastern Iowa counties.

Learn and Adapt

The DNR continued its "learn and adapt" approach to CWD management in 2003. As research and CWD testing results are completed and more is learned about the disease in Wisconsin, CWD management and strategies to eradicate CWD will be fine-tuned.

"Citizen and stakeholder concerns are important," said Tom Hauge. DNR's director of wildlife management. "We've attempted to listen to you and your concerns when developing tools to manage CWD and we intend to continue that effort."

Continued on page 2, ***CWD Management in Brief***

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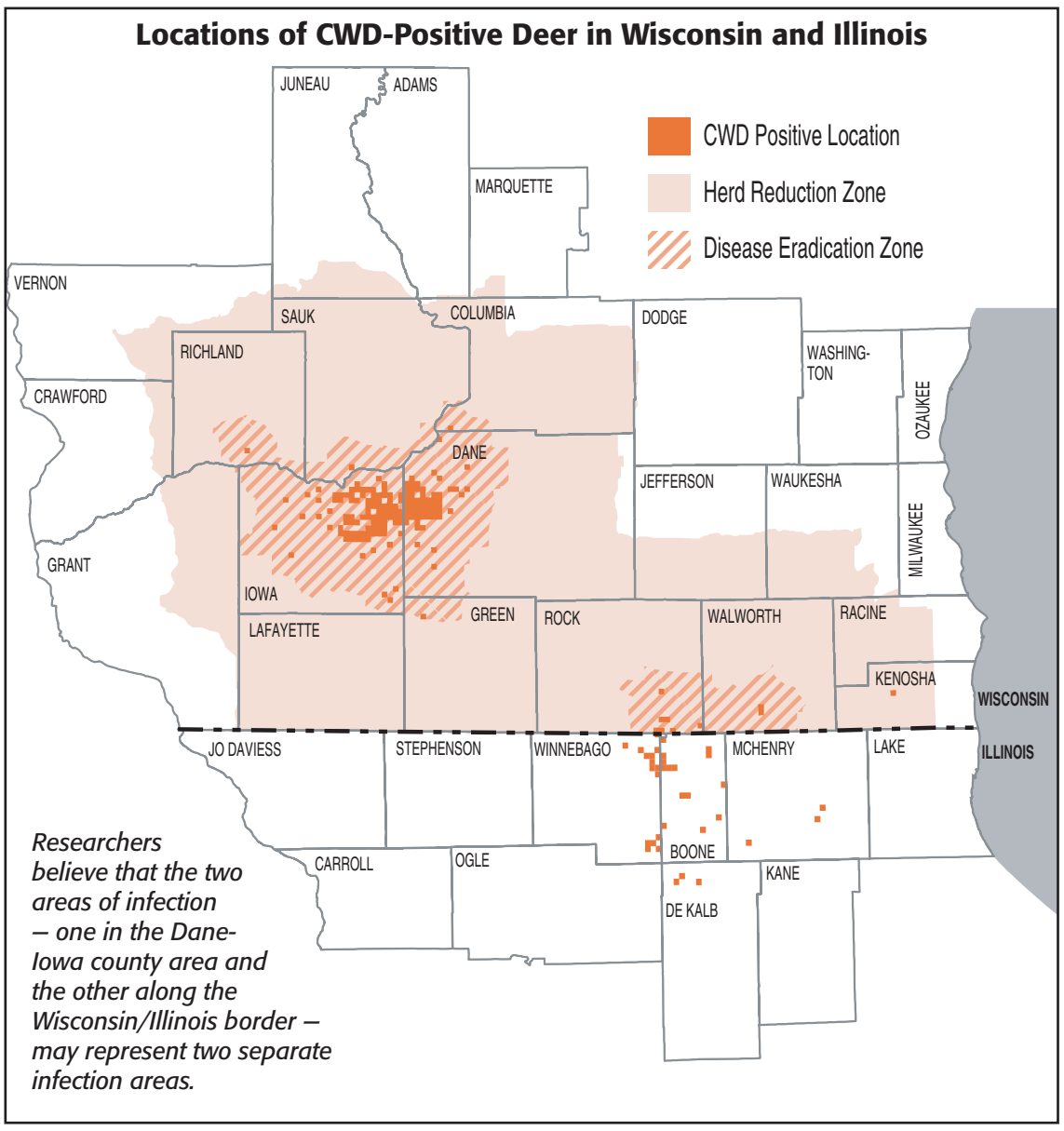
CWD in Southeast Wisconsin and Illinois

Chronic wasting disease (CWD) was first discovered in Wisconsin February 28, 2002. Later that same year, CWD was also discovered in northern Illinois, very close to our border. The Illinois and Wisconsin Departments of Natural Resources immediately began collaborating on disease management strategies to control the spread of CWD.

Since there are no landscape features that could keep CWD from spreading between the states, Wisconsin used its statutory authority to establish a disease eradication zone (DEZ) in parts of southern Wisconsin within 4.5 miles of Illinois' northernmost CWD-positive deer. Within this DEZ tools like extended hunting seasons and landowner permits could be used to reduce the herd and perform intensive surveillance.



Researchers believe that the two areas of infection – one in the Dane-Iowa county area and the other along the Wisconsin/Illinois border – may represent two separate infection areas.

Prior to the 2003-2004 surveillance period, fourteen CWD-positive deer were identified in northern Illinois in two different locations. Twelve CWD-positive deer were found in Winnebago and Boone counties north of Rockford, and two more were found in McHenry County. In response, Illinois increased firearm deer permit quotas by 20 percent in those three counties and dramatically increased their late winter DNR sharpshooting efforts.

Approximately 1500 deer were killed by hunters in the three-county area where permits were increased and a little over 1050 deer were removed by agency personnel during winter sharpshooting efforts. Illinois' surveillance efforts in 2003-2004 yielded 50 positives out of 6,117 tested. In all, 64 deer have tested positive for CWD in northern Illinois. For more information, check out the Illinois CWD website, **dnr.state.il.us**

Wisconsin's surveillance efforts in Rock County to date have yielded seven positive deer out of 913 tested. Three CWD-positive deer have been discovered in Kenosha and Walworth counties.

"We'd like a lot more data on the presence of CWD in southeast Wisconsin and northern Illinois," said Dr. Julie Langenberg, DNR wildlife veterinarian. "Preliminary studies on disease distribution indicate that the presence of CWD in this region could be a separate outbreak from that found in southcentral Wisconsin, near Mount Horeb. It's my hope that Illinois and Wisconsin will continue to work together to manage CWD, and learn more about the disease in the states."

CWD Management in Brief, *continued from page 1*

A few ways that the DNR has "learned and adapted" so far include:

Expanding the CWD zones after discovering new CWD-positive deer in Rock County and in Walworth and Kenosha counties this past season.

Changing the herd reduction goal within the disease eradication zone (DEZ) from zero deer per square mile to less than five deer per square mile in recognition of the challenge of killing all the deer and the belief that disease transmission may be reduced and disease eradication may be possible at this population density.

Instituting a CWD Reward Program paying hunters and landowners for their efforts to manage CWD after they voiced that this would be a good incentive for them to reduce the deer herd.

Finding the concept of an intensive harvest zone and a disease eradication zone confusing and combining them into a single disease eradication zone for 2004.

Aerial Deer Population Survey Results

Aerial surveys within the DEZ are done by helicopter in the winter when there is enough snow to cover rocks and stumps, making deer more observable on the landscape. Many factors affect the outcome of an aerial survey. The amount of snow cover, amount and type of vegetation, light conditions, aircraft type, flight speed and elevation all factor in.

"Snow conditions and lighting made for good survey conditions this year," said Robert Rolley, DNR wildlife population ecologist. "But no matter how good the conditions are, a major limitation of aerial surveys is that you rarely see all the deer that are present.

"Obtaining accurate and precise estimates of the size of deer populations is not easy by any method. While aerial surveys are our best available method for monitoring deer populations in CWD zones, we are still learning about these survey techniques."

During January and February, 2004, biologists flew over 201 randomly chosen square mile sections before the snow melted in the DEZ. By extrapolating the number of deer seen in the 201 square mile sections sampled to the entire DEZ, biologists estimated the population at about 21,000 deer, or about 35 deer per square mile of habitat. This translates into about a 10 percent reduction in the DEZ's whitetail herd through hunting efforts during the 2003 season. About a 20 percent reduction was achieved in the "core area" of the DEZ, the area where CWD prevalence is the highest.

Progress is being made in reducing the size of the deer herd in order to control CWD. Landowners and hunters have done the majority of the work so far but the job is far from over in the opinion of wildlife health experts who feel that a strong hunting effort must be continued to control the disease.

"Lessons learned throughout Wisconsin have taught us that, with or without CWD, reducing a deer herd is tough work. We cannot expect to achieve the herd reduction needed for CWD control in one, two or three years," said Tom Hauge, Director of DNR's Bureau of Wildlife Management. "A 10 percent reduction in 2003, with a 20 percent reduction in the area of highest infection, is a step in the right direction."

Research

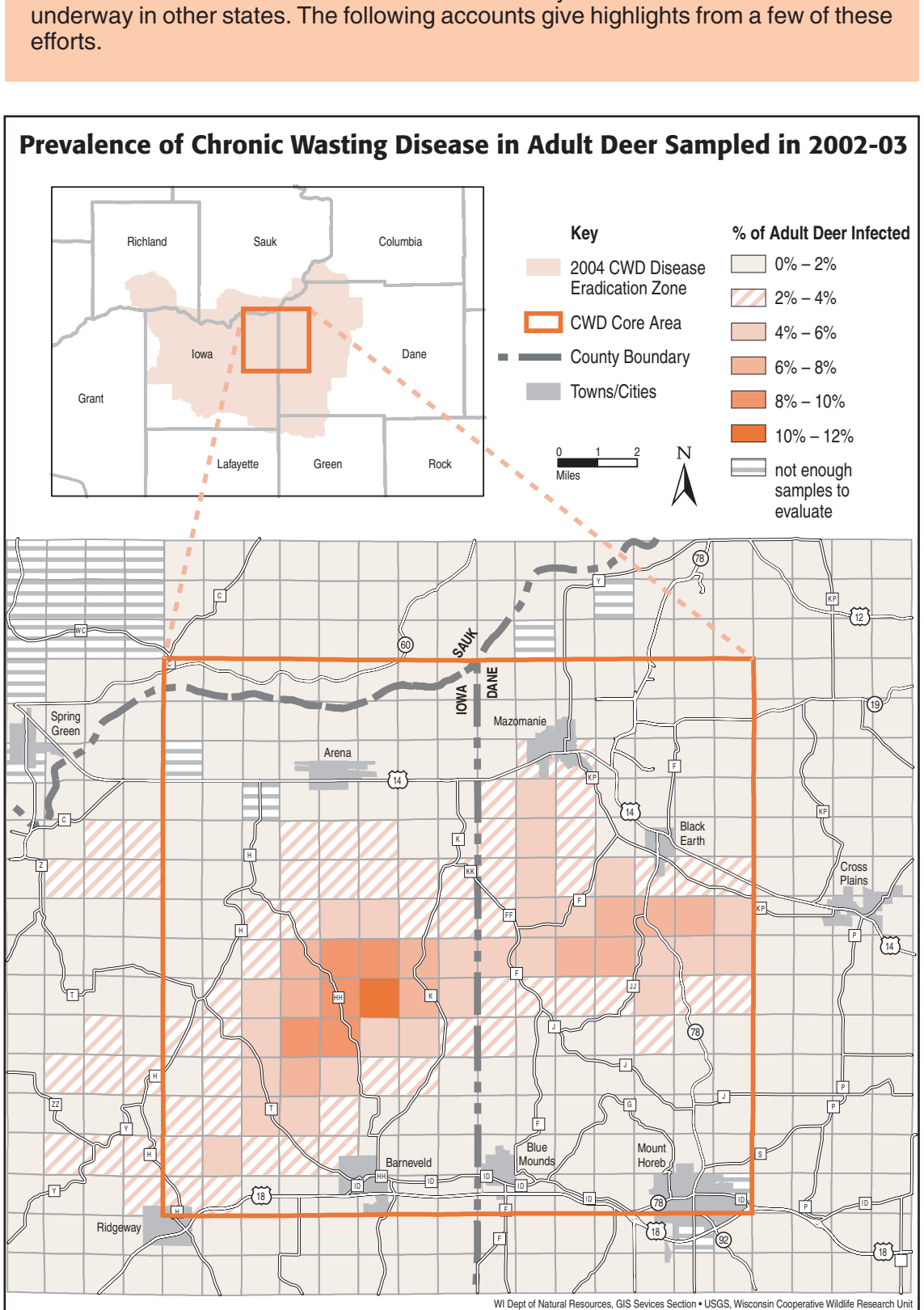
Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is a nervous system disease of deer and elk. It belongs to the family of diseases known as transmissible spongiform encephalopathies (TSEs). Though CWD shares certain features with other TSEs like bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE or "mad cow disease") in cattle and scrapie in sheep, it is a distinct disease apparently only affecting members of the deer and elk or cervid family of mammals.

The causative agent is believed to be an abnormal form of the prion protein. The CWD prions are typically found in nervous and lymphatic tissues. No treatment is known and the disease is thought to be always fatal.

In relation to many other diseases, CWD has not been known for long. There are still a lot of unanswered questions about the disease. Wisconsin has initiated an aggressive and collaborative research effort to fill in critical gaps in knowledge about CWD. The University of Wisconsin, US Geological Survey, state agencies, and other partners are all leaders in these research efforts.

Results from this research will be incorporated into CWD management strategies as part of a "learn and adapt" approach. Research is a fundamental component of CWD management in Wisconsin, along with herd reduction, public communication, and disease surveillance.

A total of 34 CWD research studies are underway in WI. Another 12 studies are underway in other states. The following accounts give highlights from a few of these efforts.



CWD test results indicate a "core" of infection in eastern Iowa–western Dane counties where as many as 10–12 percent of adult deer sampled have tested positive for CWD.

For more information on chronic wasting disease, please visit dnr.wi.gov. Click on "Chronic Wasting Disease in Wisconsin."

Surveillance and Spatial Patterns of CWD in South-central Wisconsin

Mike Samuel, Ph.D. and Damien Joly, Ph.D.
USGS Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Drs. Samuel and Joly assisted in the planning and development of surveillance strategies to detect CWD. They developed and improved techniques to analyze wildlife disease surveillance data, and applied this approach to the 2002 Wisconsin statewide program and last year's focused surveillance in southern Wisconsin. Their analysis of surveillance results support the hypothesis that CWD is a localized infectious disease likely distributed by human activity, rather than a natural process. Analysis also indicates:

- A focal area of higher CWD prevalence in the western Wisconsin affected area is likely the epicenter for the disease in that area. (see map)
- Outbreaks in south-central Wisconsin and the Illinois-Wisconsin border are separate disease introductions.
- In the core area, or area of highest infection with CWD, infection rates increase with higher densities of deer
- CWD occurs in patchy distributions on the landscape.
- CWD is a recently introduced disease in Wisconsin white-tailed deer.

All of this information supports the use of local herd reduction strategies to control the disease.

The Role of Deer Social Groups and Movement in CWD Management

Nancy Mathews, Ph.D.
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Dr. Mathews' research team has radio-collared about 80 wild white-tailed deer in the Dane and Iowa county Disease Eradication Zone. If you encounter one of these deer when out hunting, please don't shoot it. They are subjects in a research project designed to monitor movement and dispersal patterns of wild white-tailed deer.

There are two main objectives to the study. The first is to determine dispersal rates and distances of both male and female deer and to see if hunting pressure, deer density and highly fragmented habitat influence dispersal. Dispersal may play a role in the spread of CWD across the landscape. The second objective is to see how deer interact within social groups and if the home ranges of social groups overlap. Deer could be transmitting CWD to each other within and between social groups. Understanding these variables could aid in managing CWD. Using these radio-collared deer, studies will also be conducted to determine interactions between white-tailed deer and dairy/beef cattle.

Research

The Risk of CWD Transmission with Baiting and Feeding

Michael Samuel, Ph.D. and
Abbey Thompson
USGS Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit
University of Wisconsin-Madison

Tim VanDeelen, Ph.D
Department of Natural Resources

Chris Yahnke
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

In this study the research team is evaluating the role of supplemental feeding in the direct and indirect transmission of diseases like CWD in white-tailed deer. They are using various feeding techniques (trough, pile and spread) and varying amounts of corn at four supplemental feed stations and two monitored natural feeding areas within the fenced Sandhill Wildlife Demonstration Area in Babcock, Wisconsin. Disease transmission rates are being estimated through comparison of deer use, contact rates, and fecal contamination at supplemental feeding sites. Cameras are also being used to capture information on deer use and interactions occurring at supplemental feeding sites and natural feeding areas.

Biology and wildlife students at the University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point have been doing their part to quantify CWD transmission risks associated with baiting and feeding deer. They compared 2.5-gallon versus 10-gallon bait sites and piling the bait versus spreading the bait over a larger area. Using motion-sensing digital cameras, the students, led by senior Casey Wilke, found a significantly higher incidence of close deer-to-deer contact at bait sites where the bait was piled relative to sites where bait was broadcast. Deer densities increased at all bait sites relative to control sites where only natural forage was available

The Dynamics of CWD Prions in Soil

Joel Pedersen, Ph.D.
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Dr. Pedersen is trying to understand what happens to CWD prions in soil. This is important to understanding the risks for environmental transmission to deer and also to developing practical and safe disposal practices. Researchers are currently looking at the persistence of prions and the movement of prions through different types of soil. They have found that clay soils adsorb disease prions at a much higher rate than sandy soils. Researchers are using animal models to estimate how long prions persist in the soil and if infectivity declines over time. They will also be exploring what happens to prions in landfill and wastewater systems.

Genetic Resistance to CWD in White-tailed Deer

Judd Aiken, Ph.D.
School of Veterinary Science
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Researchers are investigating whether there is genetic CWD resistance in deer by comparing CWD-infected and non-infected wild deer. Conclusions indicate that there is variability in prion proteins among Wisconsin deer and that at least 95 percent of Wisconsin deer have genotypes known to be genetically susceptible to CWD. These results suggest that virtually all Wisconsin deer are susceptible to CWD and would not be genetically resistant to the disease.

Analysis of Deer Removal Efforts in southcentral Wisconsin

Michael Samuel, Ph.D. and
Julie Blanchong, Ph.D.
USGS Cooperative Wildlife Research Unit
University of Wisconsin–Madison

A cornerstone of CWD control is deer population reduction. Drs. Samuel and Blanchong are looking at harvest data to assess deer removal success and identify areas requiring increased effort. Landscape patterns of deer removal to date indicate that more deer were removed from the areas of the DEZ where there is higher deer density, from areas where there is more landowner interest in the CWD management program, and from areas in proximity to the area of highest CWD prevalence. Relatively underharvested areas (deer refuges) have also been identified. Results will be used to guide future management and public outreach activities, provide new insight into factors affecting CWD prevalence, and identify areas for focused research studies and management actions.

Human Dimensions Research

Jordan Petchenik, M.S.
Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources

Human dimensions researchers surveyed hunters statewide in 2002 and DEZ hunters in 2003 and will be sending surveys to landowners in the DEZ in 2004 to determine attitudes towards CWD management, their hunting behavior in response to CWD, their assessment of health risks, and likelihood of future hunting participation.

Landowners and hunters are key components to CWD management. Their feelings and attitudes are very important to understand and are carefully considered in making management and communication decisions.

Wisconsin also is a participant in an eight-state study of hunters' responses to CWD. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies is organizing the study which will allow comparison across states with an emphasis on learning how CWD has affected, if at all, hunting experiences, and how future hunts may be affected if conditions changed or CWD spread to new areas.

2003 Report on Hunter Effort and Attitudes

Robert Holsman, Ph.D. and
Ryan D. Meinerz
University of Wisconsin–Stevens Point

In an effort to better understand hunter behavior in the Disease Eradication Zone UWSP researchers Holsman and Meinerz, mailed diary cards over a 3-month period to 2000 hunters in southern Wisconsin to measure the amount of time they spent in the field.

Hunters surveyed in the Disease Eradication Zone averaged almost twice as many deer harvested as hunters in other southern WI management zones according to the UW-Stevens Point researchers.

The study also showed that hunters in the DEZ spent an average of 40 hours in the field during last fall's extended gun hunting season. An accompanying questionnaire found strong support for the feeding and baiting bans in the DEZ and a high level of awareness about the incentive programs offered by the DNR for harvesting more deer in the DEZ

Research

Human Prion Disease Surveillance

James Kazmierczak, DVM
Department of Health and Family Services

Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) is a TSE that affects humans. First described in the 1920s, CJD occurs sporadically worldwide at a rate of about one case per million population. The Wisconsin Division of Public Health maintains an ongoing surveillance for CJD, consisting of case-reporting by neurologists and hospital infection control practitioners, as well as reviews of death certificates. Suspected cases are investigated, and whenever possible, are confirmed by autopsy. From 1997 to date, there have been 17 autopsy-confirmed cases and 20 possible/probable cases reported through this surveillance. All of the confirmed cases are consistent with the sporadic or familial form of CJD, and do not have the characteristics of variant CJD, the form of the disease seen in Europe associated with bovine spongiform encephalopathy ("mad cow disease"). The average annual incidence of reported CJD in Wisconsin, including confirmed, probable, and possible cases, is approximately one per million.

Evaluation of peripheral lymph nodes as alternate tissues for detection of CWD

Delwyn Keane, BVSC
Wisconsin Veterinary Diagnostic Laboratory

The goal of Keane's study is to determine whether lymph nodes other than those in the neck are a sensitive indicator of disease in deer. Tonsil biopsies have been used to determine pre-clinical disease but this method requires general anesthesia. If other more easily accessible lymph nodes could be used, it might be possible to sample live deer without the additional stress of general anesthesia.

Computer Modeling of CWD in Wisconsin White-tailed Deer

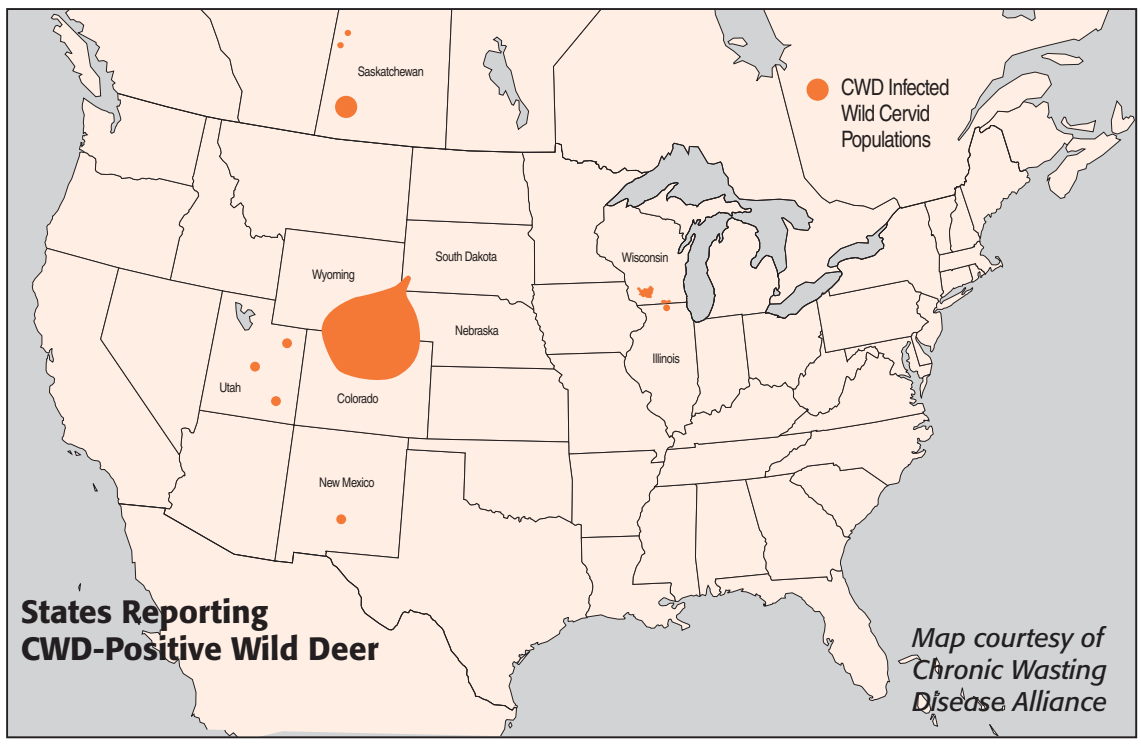
John Cary, M.S.,
University of Wisconsin–Madison

Cary has developed a computer model incorporating the best available information about Wisconsin white-tailed deer biology, deer habitat, hunting patterns, and CWD epidemiology. The model evaluates several disease-transmission hypotheses and explores the role of hunting as a disease control strategy. All of the analyzed disease transmission hypotheses gave results similar to the observed pattern of disease in the western DEZ. The model suggests that CWD may have been present in this area 7–15 years prior to discovery in February 2002. When the model is run using a pre-CWD status quo management system the results show CWD spreading, the percentage of infected deer increasing, and the deer population decreasing. The evaluations also indicated that intensified hunting appears to have a very promising role in controlling CWD. Hunters can remove infected deer before they reach the late stages of the disease when they are most likely to spread the disease to another deer. Conversely, CWD can not be controlled if deer-harvest refuges are common on the landscape

National CWD Research Collaborations

The State of Wisconsin is committed to collaborating with universities, private laboratories and state and federal agencies across the nation to expand upon the science and understanding of CWD. Wisconsin is contributing to many of the studies by providing known CWD-positive and negative wild white-tailed deer tissues that were collected during the state's surveillance efforts. Studies include:

- Investigating whether CWD is transmitted between does and fawns before they are born.
- Development of methods to detect CWD prion in body fluids (such as feces and saliva) and environmental samples.
- Determining if CWD can be transmitted to cattle.
- Investigation of possible human health risks through primate studies.
- Exploring the possibility of human health risks through comparison of the genetic and molecular structure of deer prion protein gene with that in humans.
- Developing improved CWD screening and diagnostic tests.
- Comparing Wisconsin CWD strains with those from other areas of the continent.



For more information on CWD research, visit the following Web sites:

dnr.wi.gov
and click on "Chronic Wasting Disease in Wisconsin,"

and **http://wildlife.wisc.edu/coop/CWD/CWD_Introduction.html**

For CWD questions a toll-free CWD information line
1-877-WISC CWD or 1-877-947-2293
will be in operation from 8 A.M.–4 P.M. Monday–Friday
through March 31, 2005

The 2004 Hunting Season

After a series of public meetings in south central and south eastern Wisconsin, the Natural Resources Board, the policy-setting authority for the DNR, approved revisions to the DNR's chronic wasting disease (CWD) rules and regulations. These rules will be in effect for the 2004-05 deer-hunting season.

CWD Zones

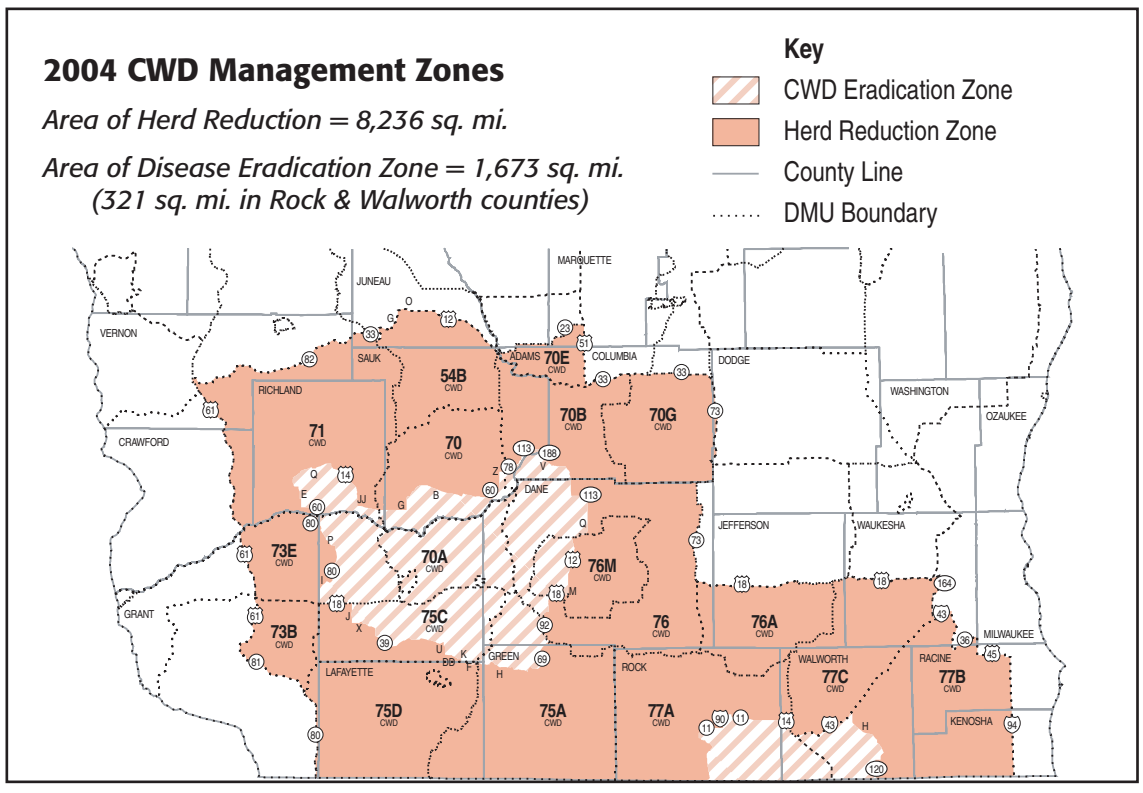
- The disease eradication zone (DEZ) and herd reduction zone (HRZ) in southcentral Wisconsin were expanded to incorporate new positives. The DEZ in Rock County now extends east into Walworth County. Portions of Dodge, Jefferson, Waukesha, Racine, Walworth and Kenosha counties will now be part of an HRZ. There is no intensive harvest zone (IHZ) this year. The DEZ and IHZ have been combined to simplify hunting regulations.
- The HRZ surrounds the DEZ and extends outward up to 40 miles around known CWD-positive deer.

CWD Zone Population Goals

- **DEZ**—Reduce deer population to less than five deer per square mile
- **HRZ**—Reduce deer population to 10 deer per square mile. This reduced population will slow the spread of CWD outside of the DEZ and also limit movement of healthy deer into the DEZ

Deer Hunting Seasons in CWD Zones

- Disease Eradication Zone (DEZ)
  - ❑ Gun: October 28–January 3
  - ❑ Archery: September 18th–January 3rd (archers must wear blaze orange October 28–January 3)
- Herd Reduction Zone (HRZ)
  - ❑ Gun: October 28–31 and November 20–January 3
  - ❑ Archery: September 18 –January 3 (Archers must wear blaze orange October 28–31 and November 20–January 3)



DEZ Landowner Permits

- The DNR will again issue permits to landowners with five or more acres of land within a DEZ.
- Under the authority of these permits, landowners can hunt without a license (provided they meet age and safety training requirements). They will receive one buck tag with the permit, and can continue to hunt through March 31, 2005 if they so choose.
- As has been the case the past two years, landowners can also authorize hunters to hunt on property they own within a DEZ. Authorized hunters can hunt on land covered by a landowner permit without a deer license provided they meet age and safety requirements.
- Landowners interested in a permit can obtain one at any hunting license sales location for a $2.00 processing fee. The permit will include one buck tag.
- Hunters wishing to hunt under the authority of a landowner permit must also go to a license vendor and request a DEZ participant hunter permit. There will be a $2.00 processing fee. The landowner must sign the hunter's permit and include their landowner permit number.
- Permits will be valid September 18, 2004 through March 31, 2005.
- For more detailed information on obtaining a landowner or hunter DEZ zone permit go to the DNR website **http://dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/whealth/issues/CWD/index.htm** or between 8 A.M.–4 P.M. Monday–Friday, call the toll free CWD Information Line 1-877-WISC-CWD (1-877- 947-2293).

Deer Tagging Options

Additional information, including specific tagging guidelines for every Deer Management Unit in the state, is in the 2004 Wisconsin Deer Hunting Regulations. The Regulations are available online at **dnr.wi.gov/org/land/wildlife/regs/Deer04.pdf** and in hard copy from license vendors and DNR Service Centers.

- Unlimited Earn-a-buck will be in effect in the CWD zones.
- Any tag can be used for antlerless deer or a buck, as long as the buck is tagged after an antlerless deer is tagged. CWD buck tags must be used for bucks if not accompanied by a tagged antlerless deer.
- Hunters are required to allow the Department of Natural Resources to take the head from all adult deer shot in the Herd Reduction Zone and the Disease Eradication Zone for CWD surveillance. Fawns will not be sampled unless a hunter requests this service. Taxidermy arrangements can be made for trophy animals.

Venison Donation Program

Hunters do not like to waste the game they shoot. This is a concern we've heard from hunters wishing to help with CWD control. Not wanting to shoot more deer than can be eaten has kept some hunters from shooting more deer in the interest of helping to eradicate CWD. We understand this conflict of values and have taken action to address this concern in 2004.

The Departments of Natural Resources, Health and Family Services and Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection will be working with meat processors and food pantry programs to store, test, process, and donate unused DEZ venison. We will have a system in place by the start of the fall hunt that will allow hunters to give deer shot in the DEZ that they cannot use to a venison donation program. The DNR will sample and test the donated deer for CWD. The donated deer will be cold-stored separately by the meat processor until test results are available. Deer testing positive for CWD will be disposed of. Deer testing negative for CWD will be further processed and then given to participating food pantries.

CWD Reward Program

Whitetails Unlimited (WTU) partnered with the DNR to implement a pilot CWD Reward Program during the 2003-04 hunting season. The joint program was designed to reward hunters and landowners who participated in harvesting deer to control CWD in the area of known infection.

We will have a similar two-part program in place for the 2004-05 hunting season. The reward program is expected to have $250,000 available for payouts in 2004.

- **Focus on Positives** will pay out $400 for each CWD-positive deer shot anywhere in the state. The $400 will be split with $200 going to the landowner on whose property the deer was shot, and the other $200 going to the hunter who harvested the CWD-positive deer. If the hunter is also the landowner they collect the entire $400.
- **Every Deer Helps** makes hunters eligible through a random drawing for a $20 payment for each deer they register in the DEZ. It's possible for hunters registering multiple deer to win more than one $20 reward.

"It is important to recognize the efforts hunters are making to reduce deer densities in CWD zones, in addition to efforts to remove CWD-positive deer from the landscape," said Pete Gerl, WTU Executive Director. "Lowering the overall deer density reduces transmission of CWD from sick deer to healthy deer in the area and is a very important tool for controlling CWD in the state."

Whitetails Unlimited paid reward money for 108 CWD-positive deer harvested and tested this past season. In total, 13,694 deer were harvested in the DEZ and IHZ. WTU had funds remaining to award $20 for 10,185 of those deer, a payout rate of about 75 percent.

"While we received numerous positive comments about the reward program, it did not appear to significantly impact the numbers of hunters and landowners that deer hunted. Anecdotal reports from the field indicate the reward payments did provide incentive for some to get out and hunt or allow others to hunt on private property. We believe a second year of the reward program will give a better picture of the overall effectiveness of this program," said Hauge.

Farmed cervid update

The Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection regulates the import, testing, identification and movement of farm-raised deer and elk to prevent the spread of CWD. All people keeping farm-raised deer must be enrolled in the CWD herd-monitoring program. Under the program, farmers must comply with

- Mandatory testing of all animals 16 months or older that die or go to slaughter
- Mandatory monitoring for farms moving live animals off property, including annual accounting for all animals, alive or dead and annual health certification.
- Restrictions on Imports/In-state Movement
- Quarantine and depopulation for farms where CWD is found

About 15 farmed herds are currently under quarantine because of known or potential exposure to CWD. As of Aug 20, 2004, 18 animals have tested positive for CWD on six farms. Eight of those positives are from one farm, six from another farm, and four farms have had single animals test positive for CWD. All CWD-positive animals were white-tailed deer with the exception of one elk.

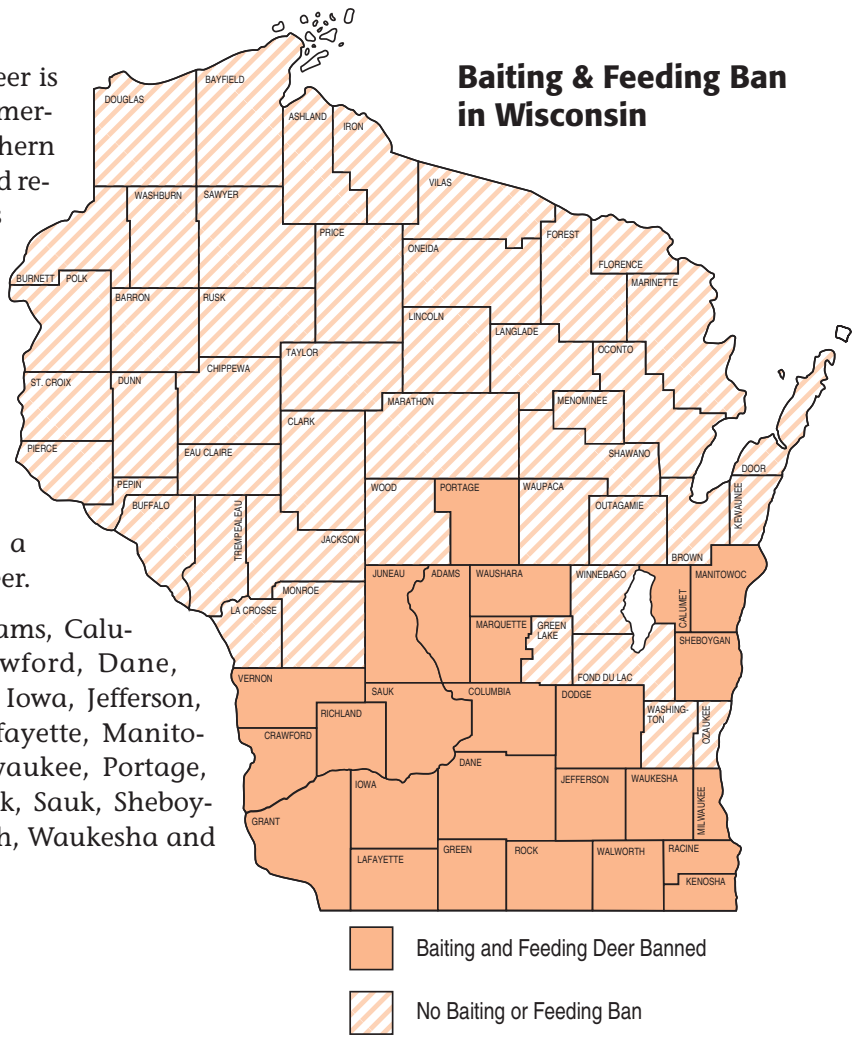
For more information on CWD relating to farmed deer, please visit DATCP's Web site at **datcp.wi.gov**.

Baiting and Feeding Banned in Counties of High Risk, Restricted in Rest of State

Baiting and feeding deer is currently banned by emergency rule in 26 southern Wisconsin counties and restricted to two gallons in all other areas.

The DNR secretary has authority to add additional counties if CWD or Bovine Tuberculosis is discovered within their borders or they are within 10 miles of discovery of a CWD or TB positive deer.

The ban includes: Adams, Calumet, Columbia, Crawford, Dane, Dodge, Grant, Green, Iowa, Jefferson, Juneau, Kenosha, Lafayette, Manitowoc, Marquette, Milwaukee, Portage, Racine, Richland, Rock, Sauk, Sheboygan, Vernon, Walworth, Waukesha and Waushara counties.



Within counties included in the Baiting and Feeding Ban scent materials and standing crops planted as wildlife food plots may be used for hunting purposes. Scent materials may not be accessible to deer except that up to 2 ounces of scent (including commercially prepared materials) may be placed in any manner. Food placed solely for attracting birds and small mammals for nonhunting purposes is still allowed statewide, as long as it is not accessible to deer and not more than 50 yards from an occupied dwelling.

Counties outside of ban area

Individuals that are not in one of the 26 counties where deer baiting and feeding is currently prohibited can feed deer for non-hunting purposes with the following restrictions:

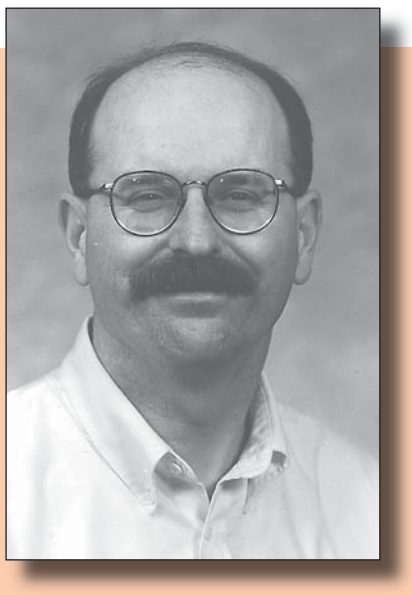
- No more than 2 gallons of feed is allowed at a feeding site.
- Feed placed out for non-hunting purposes must be within 50 yards of an owner-occupied residence or business and may not be within 100 yards of a roadway posted 45 miles per hour or more.

Additionally, during the deer hunting seasons, hunters that are not in one of the 26 counties where deer baiting and feeding is prohibited may feed or bait deer for hunting purposes with the following restrictions:

- No person may place more than 2 gallons of feed per 40 acres for hunting purposes.
- No feeding site for hunting purposes may be within 100 yards of another feeding site.
- Feed can no longer be placed when the deer hunting seasons are closed, except as allowed for non-hunting purposes.

Finally, whether feeding for hunting or non-hunting purposes, the material used to feed deer may not contain any animal part or animal byproduct.

Scientific evidence suggests that a ban on baiting and feeding is an important tool for controlling the spread of CWD in the state. For more information on CWD or the science supporting a ban on baiting and feeding, please visit **dnr.wi.gov** and click on "Chronic Wasting Disease in Wisconsin."



Much has been accomplished since Feb 2002. The following are some notable accomplishments we feel are most significant.

- Most highly attended public meetings on any issue in wildlife management history
- Special session of legislature on wildlife diseases
- Governor addresses U.S. Congress on a wildlife issue (CWD)
- Passage of a captive wildlife bill
- Comprehensive CWD testing for captive deer and elk herds
- State of the art CWD testing laboratory constructed
- Statewide audit of deer farms
- CWD Environmental Impact Statement
- Landowners & hunters in CWD Disease Eradication Zone can hunt without hunting license
- Large scale aerial surveys to estimate deer populations
- National science review panel gives high marks to Wisconsin's CWD management efforts
- 56,000-plus deer sampled for CWD
- Reward program for landowners and hunters
- Excellent safety record for hunters and DNR employees
- Baiting and feeding legislation passed

Wisconsin is in our third year of chronic wasting disease (CWD) management. A ton of things have been accomplished in that time. Most of it was ground-breaking for Wisconsin wildlife management. There were dramatic changes to hunting seasons; a statewide health check of our deer herds; large-scale testing and data systems; landowner and hunter incentive programs; carcass handling procedures; 56,000 deer tested; lots of public outreach and even a special session of the legislature. The list goes on.

I am proud of how Wisconsin has responded to this serious disease. We've reacted quickly and thoroughly. On the other hand though, I recognize that all these changes, while needed, are not what we would have preferred. We all would rather not have CWD in our state. I feel deeply for our traditions and lifestyles that have changed since the discovery of CWD in the state. Many of us are feeling a loss and want things to return to "normal" as fast as possible. Depending on your perspective, the time since February 28th, 2002, when the first three CWD-positive deer were detected, has passed by too quickly or painfully slow. Fast or slow, managing CWD has brought hard choices, involving a lot of work and a lot of resources.

So much of what's been accomplished was made possible by landowners and hunters who were willing to open up their land, hunt to reduce the deer herd and bring deer in for CWD testing. I've said it before but it's worth repeating. Wisconsin will not control or eradicate CWD without your help.

We still have much to do. In southeastern Wisconsin, we need to increase our sampling of deer to more precisely map out the range of disease. We ask for your continued support to harvest and bring them in for testing so we can base our management on the best data possible. We will also continue to collaborate with the state of Illinois on our mutual goal of reducing the deer herd and eliminating CWD.

In southwestern Wisconsin, we know much more about the range and prevalence of the disease, but your help is just as vital here. Herd reduction and testing are the cornerstones to CWD control. CWD control is the first step to CWD eradication.

As always, we are committed to sharing information about CWD with you as we learn it. We will continue to share information through print pieces, press releases, newspaper columns, public meetings, and the Internet. For the most up to date information on CWD, please visit our Web site at **dnr.wi.gov** *and click on "Chronic Wasting Disease in Wisconsin." Or, if you don't have Internet access, you can call a new toll-free CWD information number 1-877-WISCCWD (1-877-947-2293) between 8 A.M.–4 P.M.*

On behalf of the State of Wisconsin, thank you once again for your concern and assistance in helping protect the health of Wisconsin's deer herd. Your time and talent is greatly appreciated by all of us.

Tom Hauge
Director, DNR Bureau of Wildlife Management

What should I do if I observe or harvest a deer that I suspect might have CWD?

Call the local DNR office right away.
The DNR will make every effort to collect samples from the possibly affected deer for CWD testing.

Wisconsin State Agency Contacts

Department of Natural Resources
Bureau of Wildlife Management

608-266-8204

Department of Agriculture, Trade and Consumer Protection; Office of Outreach and Policy/Animal Health and Safety Issues

608-224-5130

datcp.wi.gov keyword: chronic wasting disease

Department of Health and Family Services

608-267-7321

dhfs.wi.gov/healthtips/BCD/creutzfeldt.htm

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